2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

174 the Shilluk nation. As Nyakang passed northwards along the river
171 he incorporated the inhabitants; moreover, he had magic, and so where men were lacking he turned hippopotami and other animals into human form to become his subjects.[1]

174 The Shilluk, though generally tall and long-headed, seem to us
142 to vary more among themselves than any of the riverain tribes of which we have first-hand knowledge, for while the subject (No. 1) figured on Pl. III may be taken to represent an average Shilluk youth (style of head-dress now unfashionable), a long-faced, straight-nosed and thin-lipped type, as shown in its extreme form in No. 2 is by no means uncommon, as also the handsome if somewhat fierce type shown in No. 3; there is, too, a rare, exaggeratedly negroid, type (No. 4), but this can hardly be accepted as truly Shilluk without
174 prolonged genealogical research. Such wide variation can be best explained by assuming that Nyakang and his followers represented
142 a stock carrying more Hamitic blood than the inhabitants of the
144 riverain villages and other stocks who united with them, and we have no doubt that so far as the Nilotes are concerned even at the present day the maximum of Hamitic blood is to be found among the Shilluk, who, with the exception of the Azande, are the best organized people in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and who of all the black tribes offered the most determined opposition to the Khalifa and his followers.

233 The wealth and social position of the Shilluk are estimated in
[556] cattle; sheep and goats are kept, but these are not regarded in the same, almost sacred, light as cows. Milking is done by boys and old
[462] men, women not being allowed to milk. In every village there is a number of cattle byres, such as those shown on Pl. V, but except

[173] [1] A number of Westermann's notes (*The Shilluk People*, Phil., 1912) refer to groups of the
• [539] earlier inhabitants absorbed into the Shilluk nation by Nyakang, including turtle-men (op. cit., p. 189) and some mysterious river people (pp. 181, 164–5). One of the first stories that the inquirer into the wanderings of Nyakang will hear is that of Obang or Obingi, who allowed himself to be sacrificed in order that Nyakang might pass across a river blocked with
114 vegetation. The tale, given here in Westermann's version (op. cit., p. 163), constitutes a convenient starting-point for inquiries into the events taken by Nyakang:—

"When Nyikang came, he went to the Khor Andil, with his followers; he found the river was shut up by the mudd, so that Nyikang did not find a passage. And a certain man who was an albino asked them, 'Nyikang, why do you stop?' He is because you do not find a passage?' He replied, 'Yes, I do not see a way where to pass.' The man said, 'When I have finished eating, I shall come, I will be killed with a spear, my blood will flow into the river, and the mudd will break away.' And Nyikang speared the man, his blood flowed into the river, and the mudd broke away. Then Nyikang found a passage."

Nothing definite can be said as to the date of Nyakang. Hofmayr (op. cit., 64) thinks that Ocollo, the fifth king of the genealogy, is the first historic king, and dates his reign 1600–35. Presumably this is reached by reckoning backwards; it is a reasonable estimate, giving an average reign of about 13 years, and allowing thirty to a generation.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Juok, "May Juok guard you," while a sick man may cry, *Er ra Juok*, "Why, oh Juok?"; but on the whole, Juok is so linked with Nyakang in the Shilluk mind that he is seldom approached in prayer without the mention of Nyakang (and sometimes of his son Dag). Indeed so obvious is this association that the Rev. D. S. Oyler writes: "They never pray to God without invoking an intercessor," [1] and gives the following prayer as an example:—

> "We praise you, you who are God. Prosper us, we are in your hands and prosper us, save me. You and Nikawng you are the ones who created, people are in your hands, and it is you Nikawng, who are accustomed to assist God to save, and it is you who give the rain. The sun is yours, and the river is yours, you who are Nikawng. You came from under the sun, you and your father, you two saved the earth, and your son Dok, you subdued all the peoples. The cow (for sacrifice) is here for you, and the blood will go to God and you . . ." [2]

We do not know of any definite evidence of sacrifice to Juok only; even in the all-important sacrifice for rain Nyakang is also invoked. Juok, vaguely associated with the firmament, is recognized as the creator, though now showing but little interest in his creatures. The prayers offered directly to him, collected by Hofmayr, are such dance songs as the following (we have paraphrased Hofmayr's literal translations):—

> "I pray to God (Juok), God the Giver (Juokaang), God the Protector (Juokagim); I have taken [God] to me and have become fearful to my enemies so that they scarcely dare attack me." "The Shilluk when satiated chatter like crows, they forget Juok; the Shilluk full of beer forget Juok." And a song composed by King Yor: "I pray to Juok alone for he directs the spears, spear thrusts are of Juok." [3]

Two subsidiary uses of the word Juok may be mentioned. There is an expression *pun Juok*, "the country of Juok". We formed the opinion that though this implied no local habitation it was vaguely associated with the dead; Hofmayr is more definite, regarding *pun Juok* as the place of Nyakang and the ancestors, to be reached after many months journeying in the bush. Certain diseases may in a general way be described as *juok* (though each has its own name), this term also being applied in folk-tales to men possessing supernormal attributes. Summing up, we may say that Juok is the Creator, perhaps vaguely associated with the firmament, but certainly having

[1] "Nikawng's Place in the Shilluk Religion": *S.N. & R.*, i, 1918, 283.
[2] Loc. cit. [3] Op. cit., 197-201.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

We have already referred to *pan Juok* (p. 71), the country of the dead, to be reached after long wandering in the bush, but there is also a chthonic element in Shilluk ancestor worship; the spirit persists in or round the grave and may harm its living relatives, e.g. the death of a missionary's wife shortly after that of her husband was attributed to the ghost of the latter, while Hofmayr quotes a remark of the chief Yangjok to the effect that evil comes on man from below.[1] Again, the Shilluk undoubtedly fear the *con*, the malevolent element that persists after the death of one who has died in hatred of friends or relatives, though here again the belief does not seem to bulk as largely as among the Acholi.

Offerings and sacrifice may be made to ancestors, but in our limited experience we have met with no instance that could certainly be dissociated from the cult of the royal ancestors or in which the ancestral spirits were not confused with or associated with Juok. It is true that Hofmayr describes offerings to ancestors[2] but his descriptions, taken for the most part from notes of colleagues, are not very convincing, as there is nothing to show that the cult of Nyakang or his descendants was specifically excluded. On the other hand he cites two short chants[3] which may be regarded as evidence of prayer to the ancestors:—

ure kwaje nayagen
"The people entreat their mothers (ancestors)."
ure kwaje tiengen
"The people entreat their people (their dead)."

A hæmorrhage followed by sudden death is called "the spears of the dead", i.e. the victim has been stabbed by a ghostly weapon, but the Shilluk expression, *neng tieng pa Juok*, seems to bring Juok into the matter. A more definite relation to ancestral spirits is seen in a note by Banholzer, quoted by Hofmayr,[4] to the effect that warriors obtained the services of an *ajuago* to invoke their ancestors, that the spirits of the slain may be harmless. A sheep is killed and part of the viscera placed in a pot and buried as an offering to those in the underworld.[5]

[1] Op. cit., 150. [2] Op. cit., 109. [3] Op. cit., 150. [4] Loc. cit.
[5] Oyler records that many Shilluk "take an offering of the first fruits to the grave of an ancestor, usually the father. . . . The grain is made into a sort of butter and poured out on the grave. The man then says that he has given his father a taste" ("Nikaweng's place in the Shilluk Religion": *S.N. & R.*, i, 1918, 286). But in another passage Oyler clearly shows an association of the ancestral spirits with Juok (for we assume that "God" is a translation of "Juok"): ". . . When prayer is to be offered to the spirit of a dead person, a female sheep is brought to the grave. If the person making the prayer is not the son of the

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Mr. Heasty, whom we consulted, holds that there is little difference between the worship of ancestors, and that of former kings. A suppliant would visit a royal shrine if there happened to be one near, and might afterwards resort to the grave of an ancestor. If no royal shrine were near he would immediately resort to an ancestor shrine, brushing away sticks, dirt, etc., with his hands, and offer a prayer to the ancestor. When for sickness a sheep is offered at the grave of an ancestor, an ear is severed, indicating that the sheep belongs to that ancestor and is ever afterwards sacred. Such sacred animals are handed over to some aged attendant of the shrine; their milk is never mixed with the milk of other animals, but is kept for the small children and the very aged, who come to the attendant's home to drink. The animals are never sold, and for each as it gets old one of its offspring is substituted. Such prayer and sacrifice may be offered in any serious difficulty, in sickness, before a perilous journey, or when greatly perplexed in any manner.

Human sacrifice was always rare among the Shilluk, but it undoubtedly occurred. There is a legend, likely we think to be truthful, that the shrine at Fenikang was originally erected with human sacrifice, and the idea exists that each time this shrine is rebuilt someone will die. We have already referred to the ceremonial and fatal treading underfoot of an old man (p. 91), by the king-elect and the people, and to the ceremonial drowning of a man and woman (p. 92). But besides these ceremonies more or less secret sacrifices might take place as a last resort to obtain rain—the usual prayers and offerings having failed—and for success in war. According to Hofmayr, who gives texts with literal translations,

deceased, the right ear is cut from the sheep, and tied to the ankle of the person making the offering, and the wounded ear is washed in a gourd of water . . . and then the water is poured on the grave, and part of it is thrown in the eye of the sun. . . . It is for God . . . The prayer is offered before the ear is cut off. If the sun offers, prayer is made to God and the deceased, and then the sheep is killed as soon as . . . [the sheep urinates]. The sheep is cut open, and the contents of the stomach and bowels are thrown on the house of the sufferer, and then the meat is cooked. The meat cannot be tasted until the oldest living wife of the deceased takes some of the soup in a small gourd, which is covered with a small native mat, and pours it on the grave. . . .

"While there is no set form for the prayer . . . yet they are all very similar, and the following is an example:—

"We praise you, you, who are God, it was you, who gave me my father, who begot me. I pray to you also my father. Why did you go to the earth and keep silence? Was not this your house before? When evil comes to your house, why do you not pray to God? Your house is given as a plaything to the people. You went to the presence of God, and we thought that nothing evil would befall us again, after you left. Now help, God. Why do you leave the responsibility of saving on God alone? God's spirit becomes tired (from work), and he leaves people and they die. Why do you not see and save us? You went to the ground, and you have forgotten that a person from another house does not guard yours." (Op. cit., 284-5.)

3: Westermann

● 539

FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

[For texts and their interpretations, see category 116, pp. 96, 109-120, 122-127, and 135-242. --Analyst]

a third, a spiritual or ideal, dimension. To put this in another way, the Shilluk quotation suggests that what is material has another, non-material, dimension, and we are told that *juok* is 'present to a greater or lesser degree in all things'.[1] Although *juok*, as the first principle, is the ultimate explanation for everything, the notion of *juok* seems to be particularly used to account for such phenomena as elude explanation in less abstract terms. It is a necessary logical concept for the Shilluk. Seligman quotes Dr. Hesaty as saying of *juok* that 'he appears to be one, and yet seems to be a plurality as well . . . anything the Shilluk cannot understand is *juok*'.[2] That is, what the Shilluk cannot otherwise account for, they account for by this concept. So, for example, the creation of the world and of life is the work of *juok*, and he may also be an explanation for sickness and death. The presence and powers of the foreigners are explained with reference to *juok*, for those who are specially gifted are supposed to be so by virtue of the stronger flow, in them, of the being which created and animates the universe. *Juok*, therefore, is the support of Nyikang and the Shilluk kings. Since they represent, for the Shilluk, the order of the society and the world in which they live, and since *juok* has his place in that order, it is to be expected that for them Nyikang should also be an indication of the nature of God. So, in what Hofmayr says is the oldest Shilluk song, Nyikang is represented as speaking for God 'thus God says'.[3] This association between God and Nyikang is, of course, what has led to the anthropological study of Nyikang and his successors as 'divine kings'. God and Nyikang are two terms of Shilluk thought which cannot be reduced to any third term, but co-exist and participate in each other.

Relation of Nyikang to God

Examples of this are numerous. It is said that there are few direct appeals to God, and that Nyikang is usually invoked as an intermediary. Westermann quotes a prayer which 'is said to be the only prayer to *juok*', and says that the Shilluk were taught it by Nyikang. This explanation was, presumably, given him by a Shilluk, and is an example of their interpretation of God by Nyikang already mentioned. Part of the prayer runs:

[539] There is no one above thee, thou God. Thou becamest the grandfather of Nyikango; it is thou (Nyikango) who walkest with God; thou becamest the grandfather (of man), and thy son Dak. If famine comes, is it not given by thee? Ba as this cow stands here, is it not thus: if she dies, does her blood not go to thee? Thou God, and thou who becamest Nyikango, and thy son Dak! But the soul (of man), is it not thine own? It is thou who liftest up (the sick).[4]

The association between Nyikang and God in this prayer is so close that it is sometimes difficult to know which is addressed. Since the Shilluk myth and tradition tell them much more about the nature of Nyikang, who is a man, than about the nature of God, who is not, it is to be expected that they

[1] Howell and Thomson, 1946, p. 8.
[2] C. G. Seligman, 1932, p. 76.
[3] Hofmayr, 1925, p. 7.
[4] Westermann, 1912, p. 171.

5:Lienhardt E-4 (no date) 1954 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

should understand the more abstract notion, God, by the less abstract, Nyikang. A still clearer example of the approximation of Nyikang to God in Shilluk thought is to be found in a prayer, part of which runs:

> We praise you, you who are God. Protect us, we are in your hands, and protect us, save me. You and Nikawng, you are the ones, who created, . . . and it is you Nikawng, who are accustomed to assist God to save, and it is you who give the rain. The sun is yours, and the sea (river) is yours, you who are Nikawng . . . The cow (for sacrifice) is here for you, and the blood will go to God and you.[1]

Here also may be seen the attribution to Nyikang of control of the sun and the river which, along with the rain mentioned in the first prayer, are the features of the Shilluk world upon which their prosperity ultimately depends, and which may help or ruin them.

God, Nyikang, and the Shilluk kings seem to form a continuum in the Shilluk religious system. Nyikang is thus sometimes called *juok piny* (*piny* being earth or world) while God is either simply *juok*, or *juok mal*, God above. The Shilluk king, the representative of Nyikang, is chosen ultimately by God, as he is accepted and possessed proximately by Nyikang. A long Shilluk epic begins with the lines 'Nyikang joined with God, the election was held . . .', the election being that of King Kur.[2] There are reports of a form of election slightly different from that described earlier in this essay. In Hofmayr's account the king-elect is agreed upon by the electors much in the way described, but Nuba from Liri, with whom Nyikang formed a relationship, are said to come with pebbles, which represent those who have a right to succeed. These pebbles, one of which has been prepared beforehand to represent the chosen candidate, are thrown into the fire, and the pebble representing the king-elect turns red, or white, or red and white. Red stands for prosperity in cattle, white for good crops. The chosen prince is then challenged to fight at night and, if he acquits himself well, he is told that he is a brave man, and that God has decreed that he shall be king of the Shilluk. The installation ceremonies then proceed. At one point in them, when the king-elect enters the village of Debalo on his way to the capital at Fashoda, the chief of Debalo asks him, 'What do you want here?' and the king-elect replies, 'I am the man sent by God to rule the land of the Shilluk'.[3] Despite the election there is thus a 'fiction' that it is God who chooses the Shilluk king and is the ultimate support of the Shilluk kingship. The order of the Shilluk kingdom depends upon Nyikang and the king, and Nyikang and the king derive their positions from God.

The Divine Kingship of the Shilluk

The connexion between God and Nyikang is of great importance in defining the sort of 'divine kingship' which is the central feature of the Shilluk

[1] Oyler, 1918, (ii) p. 283.

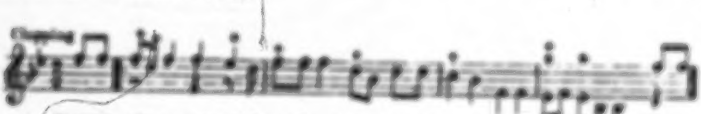
[2] Hofmayr, 1925, p. 431.

[3] Hofmayr, 1925, pp. 145 ff. Westermann, (1912, p. 122) gives an account of yet another form of election, in which sticks are placed in a fire, the one which flames most representing the king-elect.

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 F323 Shilluk F323
A-Ind. FK4
BAAI F35
Lotuko F317

A. N. Tucker.—Children's Games and Songs in the Southern Sudan. 142

in a ring, their feet under them. One of them has the missing bracelet, which he passes round surreptitiously. The leader sits in the middle and sings: "Bracelet of my aunt's wife," and the rest join in: "I want, I want now, Bracelet of poor Bago. It is lost." They clap their knees on the first beat of each bar.

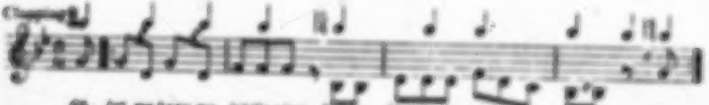


The leader may turn to any member of the circle, and, instead of clapping with his hands, lays them palm upwards on his knees: the boy now challenged has to lay his hands down palm upwards during the chorus. If he has the bracelet, he has to sit in the circle.

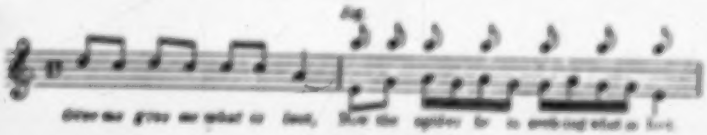
[Note. In the foregoing song there is a note which I have written sometimes as D and sometimes as Eb. In reality the note lies halfway between the two notes recorded. This, of course, does not refer to all Shilluk songs.]

The Jubek version shows a simpler rule:

The following song, taken from the Latuko, illustrates how the clapping rhythm can differ from (or not vary) the natural song rhythm:



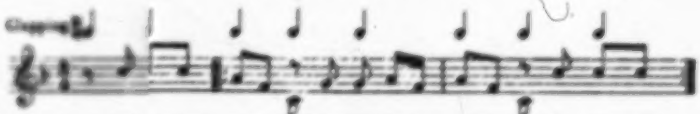
Among the Bari, the game is played with the legs stretched out in front, while the players sit in a line. One boy hides the ring, and the seeker is confused by the rhythmic passing of the players' knees. (See Fig. 2, Pl. XV.)



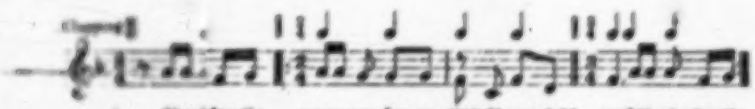
7/Tucker E-9 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Dinka FJ12
Jur FJ14

The Dinka have version similar to the above, but without song. The boys sit in a circle with their legs joining inwards and their feet touching each other, so as to form a circular enclosure, which is called the "pot." Into this pot grass and bits of stick are put by the principal player, who then walks away. As soon as his back is turned, the boys grab what is in the "pot" and eat it. The principal then returns and asks each boy in turn who has stolen his dinner, whereupon it is up to each to give him a witty answer.

2. "*There stands lady on the mountain.*"—There is a kneeling game, played by Shilluk boys and girls, which have named as above, for want of a better name. The children sit in a fairly wide circle, with two gaps, facing each other. One girl sits in the middle. Two boys stand outside the ring opposite each other. The song leader (either a boy or a girl) sings (in 3/4 time): "Oh manchild you," and the chorus shout "Hak" on the second beat.



Meanwhile the two outside boys walk to one of the gaps and flip their fingers at each other, then to the other gap and flip their fingers again. After a while the song (and rhythm) changes to:



and one of the boys dies into the circle and marks time in front of the girl. If she does not approve of him, she will turn away from him, and he will try to stand in front of her two or three times, but she will always turn away. Then the boy will give up trying to attract her attention, and will go outside the circle again, and the first song will be sung till it is time for the second boy to enter the ring. If she refuses him too, more boys have to be chosen. If she approves of him, she will gently stroke his legs with her hands, while he marks time in front of her, till the music changes back to the first movement. Each boy usually tries three or four times, and very often a boy who has nobody's favour at one time, might find himself given the cold shoulder the next time, especially if the girl is afraid of being chaffed about him after the game.

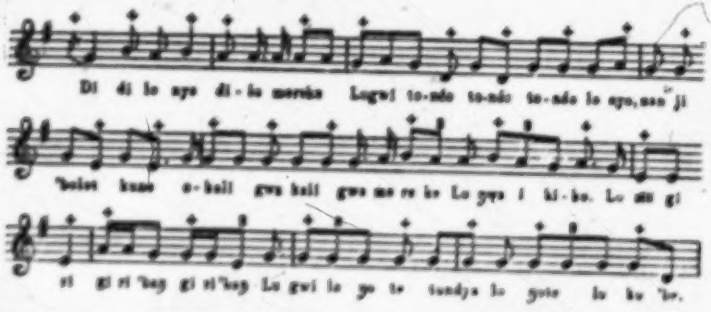
3. The following bowling game was obtained from the *Jur*.[1] The formation is something like "Hunt the slipper" among the Shilluk, but there is no bowler. The centre person will sing, and the rest join in, clapping their hands on their knees.

[1] A Shilluk speaking tribe in the Bahr el Ghazal, in close cultural contact with the Dinka.

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Bari FJ5

B
524
533
539

The following counting-out song is most difficult to scan, and was obtained from the Bari-speaking Pojulu. (It was impossible to try to divide this song into "bars" in a musical sense; the "bars" here merely indicate phrases):—

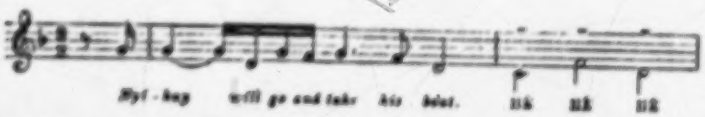

Di di lo nyo di-lo morika Lugwi to-ndo to-ndo to-ndo lo nyo, nyo ji
'boiet kuno o-bell gwo bell gwo no re lo Lo gyo i bi-bo. Lo mo gi
ri gi ri 'bag gi ri 'bag Lo gwi lo go to tondya lo gyio lo bo 'bo.

S
524
516

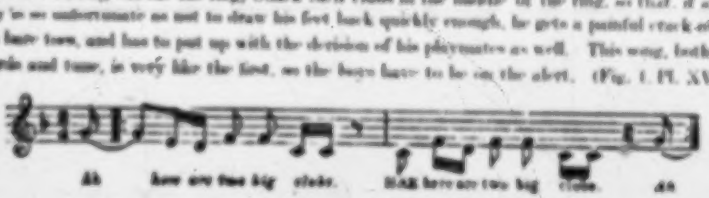
6. *"Simon says 'thumbs up!'."* A very peculiar Shilluk game which necessitates sitting in a circle with the legs straight in front: may be likened to "Simon says 'Thumbs up!'", except that the action is done with the toes. The boys sit round in a sort of circle with their feet stretched out in front of them to meet in the centre, like the spokes of a wheel. The shape of the "hub" of the wheel is, however, square, not round: six, for this game, eight, twelve or sixteen is a good number for the players. Outside the ring, on opposite sides of it, stand two men with clubs. The song-leader sits with the rest.

First movement: Song-leader sings, "Nyikay was about to seize his boat." The boys all lean forward and grab their toes, keeping their knees still, while they chant: "Heigh! Heigh! Heigh!" (Fig. 3, Pl. I.)

S
524
533
539



Second movement: Song-leader sings, "How are two clubs!" The boys quickly draw their feet back and sing, "Hah! How are two clubs!" At the word "Hah," the two men, who are standing outside the ring, whack their clubs in the middle of the ring, so that, if any boy in so unfortunate as not to draw his feet back quickly enough, he gets a painful crack over his bare toes, and has to put up with the derision of his playmates as well. This song, both in words and tune, is very like the first, so the boys have to be on the alert. (Fig. 4, Pl. XV.)

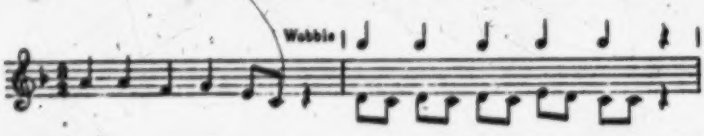


7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Nuer FJ22

S
524
533
539

Third movement: The boys all chant together "Open and shut, Open and shut!" At the word "Open," all the toes are bent backwards, at the word "Shut" they are all bent forwards, so that the centre square of toes looks like some great black sea-anemone opening and shutting itself.

Fourth movement: Keeping their feet and toes still, the boys wobble their knees rapidly up and down. I was unable to get the words of this song, but the tune is as follows:—

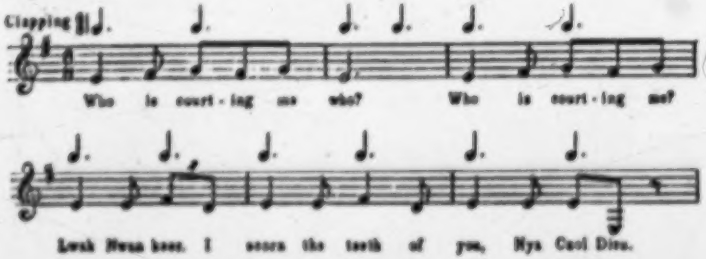


These movements can come in any order, according to the will of the song-leader.

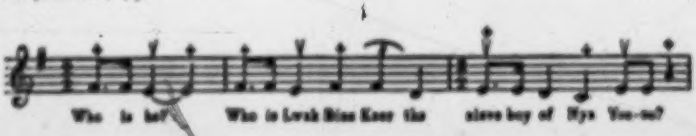
N
524
516

7. *Nuer* girls are fond of ring games, but there is little action in those that I have seen. The girls kneel in a ring; one girl sings a song of about three lines, and the rest repeat it, clapping their knees. Then the girl next to her takes up the song, extemporizing upon the same theme with a view to scoring a "hit" off one of those present. If she succeeds, she is greeted with yells of approval, and all join lustily in the chorus, while the third girl cudgels her brains for the inspiration necessary to cap this verse if possible. These witticisms usually lie around the names of friends or bear some obscure reference to well-known incidents, with the result that an investigator without intimate knowledge of the children's daily affairs finds the songs unintelligible. This is one of the verses:

N
524
533
539



In the following song the voice rhythm (indicated V) differs markedly from the clapping rhythm (indicated ♩):



7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
FJ22 Nuer
FJ18 Mitta

The following singing game requires rapid thought and good memory. Each girl in turn has to think of a different animal's name, the aim being not to repeat the name a previous girl has sung :— N 524 533 539

8. *Ring o' Roses.* There are many games which comprise more dancing or capering in a ring. In the following Baka game the players first dance round in a ring, holding hands, singing : - M 524 533 539

Then, with a change of the music, they swing their right legs over their arms, and hop round until they fall down. (See Fig. 5, Pl. XV.)

[*Note.* The note transcribed E sounds somewhere between E and F.]

9. A popular form of "Ring o' Roses" is played as follows. The Shilluk version has two parts, but the words of the song have no decipherable meaning. (Here again I heard a note which was difficult to place. I have transcribed it sometimes E and sometimes F.) S 524 533 539

First movement : The players stand in a circle with hands on each other's shoulders, and sway as they sing :—

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Achol. FK4
Bari FJ5
Latuko FJ17

S
524
533
539

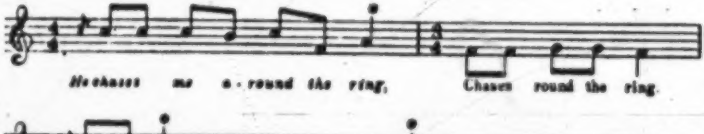
Second movement: The leader will drop his hands and run round the boy to his right and back to his place. (See Fig. 6, Pl. XV.) This boy will now run round the boy to his right, and so on, until everybody has run round his right-hand neighbour, and no one is left with his hands on his neighbour's shoulders. After which the children revert to the first movement. The song for the second movement is sung at almost twice the speed of that for the first movement.

A
L
B
524

Among other tribes, only the second movement is gone through. In the Latuko song I have transcribed the "uncertain note" sometimes as A and sometimes as B♭.

Latuko:

L
524
533
539



A
533
539

Acholi:

Bari:

B
533
539

S
524

10. The following Shilluk ring-game is a difficult test for the players' rhythmic sense, and many Shilluks fail, much to the derision of their comrades. The players stand in a ring, holding each others' shoulders, and a stick, about three feet long, is laid on the right-hand side of one of the boys, pointing towards the centre of the circle. The players now sing a supposedly "Dinka" song, and the boy marks the rhythm by springing, with both feet together, to and fro across the stick. At a certain point in the song, to be determined by himself, he must

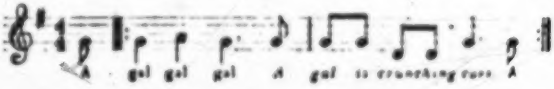
7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Lotuko FJ17

double his time, *i.e.* spring from side to side twice as fast, and on the last note he must end up on the right-hand side of the stick, *i.e.* opposite the side from which he began, so that the circle may move round one pace, while his left-hand neighbour has an attempt. Should the unfortunate dancer finish up on the left-hand side of the stick, he is howled out of the game.

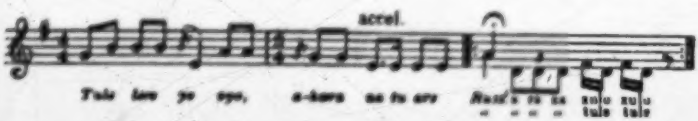
In the following song I have indicated by the letters R and L the jumpings, right and left, of one of the successful players. This is, of course, not the only way in which the rhythm is distributed :—

R L R L R L
Nya ka do nya kano dog e ya, Ji ya ma ji - ya mo ji ya.
Ji yi ya la nyi dhogo nya yi ka Nyayi ka nya yi ka mo jine
ka o kaw mu ji ya ka yi ka yi dhog i a. Dho ga nya yi ro thog
ja yi ro thog ja yi ro thog ja yi ro. Dho go nya yi ka ka o kaw mu ji ya.

11. Another Shilluk jumping game consists merely of springing from the ground to a rapid rhythm, the legs going apart and together. An important point is that the left heel should hit the right ankle when the feet come together in mid-air.

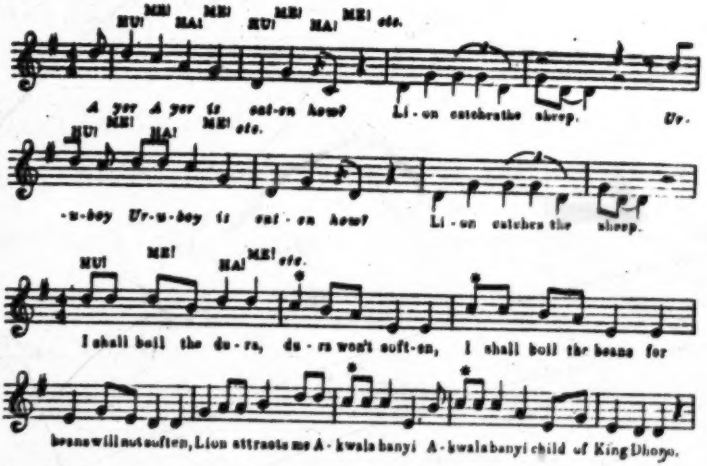


12. *I have seen among the Latuko a form of ring game in which*, at the word "russ!" the song-leader will swing his section of the line into the middle of the circle. When this is done very vigorously, it is hard for those on his immediate left and right to keep their feet.



7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Nilotes FJ2
Dinka FJ12

Of the two songs recorded here, only one of them has any reference to the game in its text. S 524 533 539


HU! MI! HA! MI! etc.
A yer A yer is eat-en how? Li-on catches the sheep. Ur.
-u-boy Ur-u-boy is eat-en how? Li-on catches the sheep.
I shall boil the du-rs, du-rs won't soft-en, I shall boil the beans for
beans will not soften, Lion attracts me A-kwala banyi A-kwala banyi child of King Dhoyo.

Among other tribes the game resembles more our game of "*Cat and Mouse*." The singers stand in a large circle, holding hands. The Leopard has to chase the Sheep in and out of the circle, the two calling to each other with grunts and bleats. The Sheep is allowed to rush in or out under the singers' arms, but the Leopard's progress is barred as far as possible, and he has to try to break through. When caught, the Sheep becomes Leopard, and a new victim is sought. N 524

The singers incessantly jog from one foot to the other during the game, as no African can stand still while singing. Here again the words of the song need have no reference to the game.

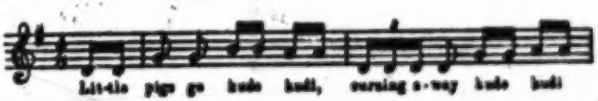
Dinka: D 533 539

Goat is not burnt up. Then the goat is a goat of very good sense.
Goat is not burnt up. Then the goat is a goat of very good sense.
Goat is not burnt up. Then the goat is a goat of very good sense.

7:Tucker E-S (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Dinka FJ12
Acholi FK4
Lotuko FJ17

D 524 533 539

Very often the end boy will stand still, and the rest of the line then proceeds to wrap itself round him, singing:—



The whole game is done at the double, and is played much faster than among the Acholi. The words have nothing to do with the game, being, as often as not, eulogies on favourite bulls.

ARCH GAMES.

A L S 524

16. *Oranges and Lemons.* The versions of this popular game differ from tribe to tribe, but all have this feature in common, viz., the two principals stand facing each other with their arms making an arch; they do not clasp each other's hands, but slap their palms against each other to a rapid rhythm, while the other members of the game dash through the arch. The game is considerably more vigorous than among European children, and the "last man" is seldom captured without a scuffle.

Shilluk:

S 533 539

L 533 539

Latuko:

A 533 539

Acholi:

S 524 A L 524

The "last man" is treated variously. Among the Shilluk he is banished from the game, and this continues until only two players are left, and these have to chase each other. Among the Latuko and Acholi the game proceeds upon more European lines. The captured player is

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Nuer FJ22

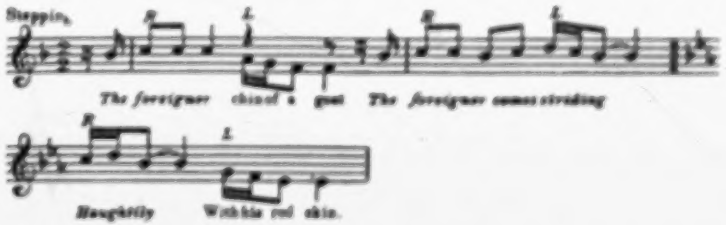
LOVE GAMES.

N 524 18. *Nuts and May.*—The Nuers have a form of this game of which the details are rather vague. The children stand in two lines, facing each other, some dozen yards apart. A member of one line advances towards the other line with a peculiar prancing step, waving his hands above his head, singing :—

N [533 539]

(The words, so far as I could make out, are meaningless.) He singles out a member of the other side and chases him round both lines and back to his place. What happens if he catches him I could not find out.

S 524 533 539 The following Shilluk version is evidently a recent invention, and probably confined to the particular group of Shilluks I was studying. The boys line up in two ranks, as if for "Nuts and May." One line advances towards the other, marching slowly in "goose step" (*see* Fig. 4, Pl. XVI), while the other line retreats, both sides singing :—



Then the song is repeated, while the other line advances, and so on, to and fro, several times. Suddenly the pace is doubled : the boys running stiff-legged, these advancing trying to kick the shins of those who are retreating. The song now is :—

As before, on every repetition the direction is changed

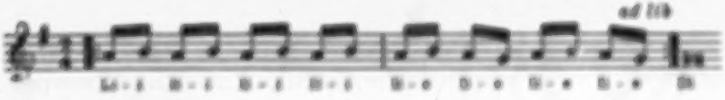
7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 F323 Shilluk F323

This game is definitely a hit at the white man. The "chin of a goat" in the first song refers to the beards of the R.C. missionaries (beards being considered unseemly among the Nilotic tribes); while the kicking in the second song is thought to be a skit on the average official's use of his boots when angry or impatient.

19. *Holding one's Breath.*—A much more popular line game among all tribes is that of holding one's breath for a certain period. The Shilluk play it as follows. The boys line up in two ranks as if for "Nuts and May." One boy on one side places the tips of the fingers of one hand on top of his head, takes a deep breath, and proceeds to walk briskly round the other line of boys and back to his own place, chanting in step :—

without drawing breath until he gets back. If he chokes or his voice ratches, the rest chase after him and pinch his arms. The boys go out alternately from each side in turn, but one boy need not wait till his neighbour is in before setting out himself. If too many boys get back safely, the lines withdraw till a greater distance separates them.

Not all tribes sing for this game. The Bari and Latuko merely march round humming on one note and pinching their noses at intervals. The Acholi sing the following song :—



the "Li . . ." being prolonged until the boy is back in his place.

Imitations of Animals, etc.

Though really coming under a different category, the following few games are included here by virtue of their songs :—

20. *Buck-back as a Trap.* (*See* Figs. 5 and 6, Pl. XVI.) This game is played by the Azande, and its success depends entirely on how the principal player can imitate the animal's movements. The boys stand in a ring, holding hands. One boy is in the middle, and he is "Ghudi,"

7:Tucker E-S (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ43
Latuko FJ17
Acholi FK4

S 524 S16

18. Hoopoe.— The most clever animal caricature I have seen was among the Shilluk. One boy crouches down and is entirely muffled in clothes. Over his head, from front to back, he holds a stick, grasping it with both hands just in front of his forehead. The stick is also covered with a cloth, and the front end tied with string, so that the crouching figure looks like some great bird with a long bill. (Fig. 4, Pl. XVII.)

First movement: The bird solemnly nods its head, while all sing:—

S 524 533 ● 539

Second movement: The song-leader sings something that sounds like:—

At the word "Turn," which is emphasized and drawn out, the bird shoves its long beak round to one side, giving it a most inquisitive look.

Third movement: The song-leader shouts "Loka-loka-loka!" The bird at once pecks rapidly on the ground.

524 525

This is a real nature study. The bird here caricatured is known as the "Hoopoe"—a handsome little bird, with an air of stupid solemnity, and the three movements described above are characteristic. No one who has seen the bird could fail to recognize it in the boys' game.

19. Canoe. The boys sit in a line, some dozen or so of them, each with his feet on either side of the boy in front, as though tobogganing. They sing, rocking gently from side to side:—

533 539

Suddenly the song-leader shouts "The boat is sinking! the boat is sinking!" With a concerted cry of "Help!" the whole line heels over on to one side. They recover, and heel over on to the other side. They recover, and heel over backwards; after which the boat resumes its interrupted journey. (Fig. 5, Pl. XVII.)

Strangely enough, I have met with a similar game among the Acholi and Latuko, although both are inland tribes. Among the Acholi the boys sit one behind the other, as in the Shilluk version, while the song-leader walks round with a strong stick in his hand. At a given moment he places the stick against the shoulders of the squatting boys and sings:—

12: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

EXAMPLES OF SHILLUK FOLK-LORE

BY Mrs. D. S. OYLER.

538 The natives call stories of this description "Lion Heads". Formerly they
539 thought that if a person told them in day light he would be taken by a lion, hence they are nearly always told after the sun goes down. It is impossible to translate them word for word, as much is told in the gestures, and in the face of the narrator. With the above exceptions the following examples are literal translations.

539 1. The cormorant was looking about in the river, while the crocodile was swimming with his hunger. The cormorant was looked upon as a possible source of food, but then the crocodile noticed his pointed bill, and long neck. It looked too much like a spear and its handle to please the wily crocodile, and so he said, "Friend, why is your beak so sharp? Will it hurt people like a spear?" The cormorant replied, "You have said it". Then he offered to let the crocodile feel his sharp beak, which he did, and went away scared. As a result, the cormorants have always been able to swim peacefully on the river.

The crocodile then went to the Nile perch. He was afraid of the large mouth, and he said, "Friend, why are you so strong? Why is your mouth so large? Why are your shoulders so great?" It replied, "My mouth has no teeth. Put in your hand and see." The crocodile did so, and said, "I was afraid of food". He ate that perch, and since then the crocodiles have eaten the Nile perch.

2. A lion was under a tree eating his kill, and he was discovered by the hyena, and the hyena ran in after the food and he snatched the food, and the male lion ran after it, and the hyena was tired from running, and he covered himself with mud, and he gave battle to the lion. The hyena would bite, and his teeth would sink into the lion, but when the lion bit the hyena his teeth slipped from the mud. And the lion died, and his mate came to

12: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918)1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

give battle, and she suffered a like fate, and all the lions feared. But the rabbit came and said, "Let us take your case to the judge". "And who will judge?" "The king". But the lion said, "My case is not ready". And they did not finish the case so the rabbit returned to his country. 537

3. The oriel, one of the animals, was fishing for snails, and he was seen by the hyena. The hyena gave chase, and the oriel ran away. The hyena returned to find the snails, but they gave him trouble by hiding from him. On the morrow the same thing occurred, and the rabbit saw the hyena, and he said, "What do you seek?". "I seek the oriel". "How does he trouble you?". "He is hunting snails". "I will help you". And on the morrow they laid in wait for the oriel, and when he had the snails the hyena gave chase. The rabbit hid in the edge of the grass, and got the snails. The hyena returned from chasing the oriel, and he said, "Rabbit, give me my snails". "Why should I give them to you? Were they taken by you formerly?" The rabbit replied, "Each one takes his own".

4. The rabbit was feeding a *Nile* perch. Six times it had fed the fish (hoping to eat it when fat). The lion chanced by that way one day, and saw the fish that it was there, and he pierced it with a fish spear, and he took it, and he cooked it, and he ate it. And he was satisfied with it, and he lay down. The rabbit came, and he found the fish that it was almost. And he said to the heron, "Inform me, who took the fish?". The heron laughed, and the rabbit promised to give him something for the information. And he promised that if the heron recovered a portion of the fish a share of it would go to him. And the heron said, "The lion took your fish". The rabbit went, and he found the lion lying down on the ground, and he feigned to be ill. And the rabbit said, "What do you have?" (Or, you were taken by what?) "I have a cold". "No witch-doctor has been near you?". "None". The rabbit told the women of the house to prepare a great jar of very hot soup-like gruel. The food was finished and brought by the women, and it was set down in the room, and the rabbit ordered the women to leave. He said, "Lion, open your throat". And the lion opened his throat and the rabbit poured down all the hot soup, and the lion turned on his back, and he beat the air convulsively with his feet, and he died. And

12: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

• 53 the rabbit went out, and he closed the entrance to the enclosure (or zariba) with dura stalks, and he said, "Women, let no one enter the enclosure". And he took the fish spear of the lion, the one with which he had speared the fish, and he went away saying, "I am going to dig medicine. Let no one enter."

The evening advanced, and the wife of the lion said to her child, "Should you not go in to see your father?". And the child found her father that he was dead, and the women wept, and the men. The sons of the lion came running saying, "Why?". And they said, "Our father has been killed by the rabbit". And they said, "Remain silent. We will kill some one in our father's place. We will kill the rabbit." And they went to seek the rabbit, and they found the rabbit eating honey, and he said, "What do you seek?". "We seek you, rabbit". And the rabbit kept one ear fastened down to his head, and one eye closed, as though he only had one eye. And the rabbit said, "Beware, do not kill of another house. Now sit down in the shade of the tree. And am I here only one eye, and my ear is misplaced. Eat of my honey and return." And he said, "The rabbits are of three different lines (of ancestors), *Kwa Ibâ*, *Kwa Dung*, and *Kwa Wa Ni Kwaie*. Was the one who killed your father one eyed?" "No". "Beware. Return not again." And they went, and their father's place was lost. No one died for him.

2. The hyena found the land lizard, and the hyena asked the land lizard saying, "Are you fat?". And he replied, "I am all oil". "Where do you sleep?", said the hyena. "I sleep here on the earth". "Do you know the jagged lightning?", asked the hyena. "I do not know it". The hyena said, "I am going". After he left the rabbit came and said, "Land lizard, you were talking about what to the hyena?". "The hyena asked me if I was fat". "Were you not asked by the hyena because he wants to eat you?" Now at night you climb up in the tree, but leave your clothes on the ground. The hyena came back at night in the rain, hurrying, yet moving cautiously so as not to disturb the lizard. The hyena leaped upon the clothes of the lizard, and devoured them. The hyena cursed the lizard and said, "What ruined it?" (He could not understand why the lizard was not fat). The lizard said, "I am up here in the tree". "Who put you up there?" "Was it not the rabbit who told me to get up here?" The hyena began to curse the

12: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918)1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

rabbit, and said, "Where is he that I may kill him?". The rabbit who had been hiding in the grass, and listening said, "Here I am". The hyena gave chase, and the rabbit ran away. They had a very exciting chase until they came to the house of the porcupine, and the rabbit ran into it. The hyena called to the blue heron, "Go get the cham". (The cham is an iron bar used for digging. The name for it is the same as the verb for eating.) The heron flew away to the house of the hyena, and said to the women folk, "The hyena sent me to eat". They cooked food and set it before the heron, and after it had eaten it returned to the hyena saying, "I have eaten". Impatiently the hyena said, "It was not the food I meant a little while ago. It was the cham. Go get the cham." The heron returned to the house of the hyena, and said, "I have returned. Bring food". He ate and returned to the hyena, saying, "I have eaten". The hyena in wrath said, "Sit down here. Remain here at the door lest the rabbit come out. I am going, but remain at the door itself."

The hyena left, and the rabbit eyed the door (put his head out), and he said, "The hyena will dig". And the heron cursed the rabbit, and said, "Your ears have been drawn out long by the sun". And the rabbit laughed heartily, and said, "You cursed me, and cursed the hyena with a very bad curse". In turn the rabbit cursed the heron and said, "Your neck is so long it shakes like grass in the current". And the heron laughed, and the rabbit ran out. The hyena came and said, "This is what I meant, this is the cham, the thing to dig in the earth. Is the rabbit here?" "He is here". "He came to the door just now, and I talked to him". The hyena said, "Sit down over there". And the hyena dug to the end of the hole, and the rabbit was not there. He said, "The rabbit is absent. Shall I not eat you?". He said, "Do not eat me then, but toss me up in the air, and I will turn into fat, and fall into your mouth". The hyena tossed it up, and held it upward with his eyes closed. The heron spit into the mouth of the hyena, and then flew away.

6. A boy named Ajok was not able to speak, although he could hear. A lion came to the village, and said, "I am looking for Ajok". He was told that Ajok could not speak, but he insisted, and said he would make Ajok speak. Ajok was brought, but he answered nothing to the greeting of the

12: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

53 lion. The lion went and killed the ox of Ajok. The people said, "Why did you kill the ox of Ajok?" "I said that I would open the mouth of Ajok". And the lion left. It was told Ajok that his ox was killed, and the people said they would go to kill the lion, but Ajok refused. He said, "No, I will go alone". And he said to his mouth, "My two dogs, and my axe three I will take". He went, and he arrived at the house of the lion, and the king of the lions said, "The cow in the cow-pen give to me". And the messengers came saying, "We were sent by the king to bring the ox". And he said, "Let the king come himself". And the king came saying, "Give me the ox". He refused, but finally he said, "Take it". And the king took the ox, and he speared the king of the lions so that he died. The people, the followers of the lion king ran, such as were lions ran away, but the servants who were people remained, and served Ajok. The cattle of the lions which were lions in disguise, ran away, but the cattle that were cows remained, and were taken by Ajok. And the gourds with milk in them that were lions ran away, but the gourds of the people remained, and were taken by Ajok (*i. e.* Part of the servants, cattle and gourds belonging to the king of the lions, were actually what they seemed to be, but part of them were lions in disguise).

Ajok went to the domain of another lion king, and the king said, "Bring me an ox". But Ajok said, "Bring it yourself". And the lion took an ox, and Ajok speared him as he had the other lion king, and took over his subjects in the same way. He took also all the property that was of men, and he had many slaves. He took all his property, and went, and built a village near his old home. And a time of hunger came, and his sisters came to his place to gather plants to eat. He recognized them, but he seemed strange to them. He gave them milk, and told them to throw away the grass which they had gathered, and he gave them kaffir corn to fill their gourds. They went home and said to their mother, "Mother, we found a man who looks like Ajok". But the mother said, "Ajok was eaten by the lions". And she was in mourning. She would not anoint herself with oil, and she would not wear clothes, and her hair was permitted to grow. They said, "You go on the morrow". And he gave them milk, and he gave them kaffir corn. She said, "You are my son". And in grief she said, "I will certainly kill myself". And she ran toward the river, and he ran after her, saying, "I am Ajok". And she returned, and he had her head shaved, and

12: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918)1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

had her anointed with oil, and gave her fine clothes, and gave her a house, and gave her four servants to prepare her food. 539

7. A great grass fire was raging, and a snake was caught in such a way it could not escape. A man passed by, and he said, «Snake, come to me, and I will save you». The snake coiled about his neck, and he carried it to a safe place, and he said, «Sit upon the earth. We have arrived.» (We have arrived at our destination.) And the snake said, «I refuse. I will not sit upon the ground. Why do you throw me off?» The man attempted to unroll the snake, and put it on the ground, but it opened its mouth, and it threatened to bite him, and the man feared. And they went, and they met the rabbit, and the rabbit said to the man, «Wherefore?». And the man said, «I am walking with the snake». And he said to the snake, «Wherefore?». And the snake said, «The man saved me from the fire. I was about to be burned. What do you say?» And the rabbit refused, saying, «This judgment is too difficult for me». And he went, saying, «Take the case to another». And they found the king frog, and the frog said to the man, «Wherefore?». And he replied, «I am walking with the snake». And he said, «Snake, wherefore?». And the snake replied, «I was saved by him». «Eh, you were saved by him, but what do you say now?» And the snake said, «Why am I forced to walk my own walk?». And he called upon the frog to hear the case, and the frog said, «In a case the participants are separate. Come off, snake. Move over farther.» And the snake moved off by himself. The king frog said to the chief after him, «Son of the chief, hear the case». (He commissioned his head chief to try the case.) And the chief said, «Man, state your case». And the man said, «Master, I found the snake. He was about to be burned by the fire, and I told him to run to me, and he coiled himself about my neck. I ran with him to a safe place, and I told him to go to the ground, and he refused to leave my neck. And when I laid hold on him he opened his mouth, and wanted to bite me, and his mouth is large, and his teeth are great.» And the frog said, «Man, is that your case? Snake, what do you have to say?» And the snake said, «Why was I taken? Why was I not left to die?» The frog said, «Snake, I condemn you. Has not man saved people from long ago? If there was no man, and you walked on your feet, you would have been

12: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

●537 burned». The snake said, «Is that your talk? We will not see each other again. When I meet you, I will eat you, because you spoke against me. When I see you in the grass I will leap on you.» And the frog said, «Very well. When you take me in the grass I will cry, '*Aw, aw*', and the man will come, and spear you». And the frog cleared the man.

8. The rabbit moulded a person of mud, and put it on a calf skin, and put it in their house, and he went to his mother and said, «Give the traveller food». And his mother cooked the food, and put it in the house. And the rabbit drove every one out, saying, «Do not look at the traveller eating». And when the people were out, the food was eaten by the rabbit. And this took place daily, but one day meat was cooked with the food, and the rabbit was absent, and his mother put the food before the person and his mother said, «Why does the person remain in one place?». And she touched the figure, and it broke, and she was surprised, and said, «The rabbit deceives people». And she threw out the figure. The rabbit came and said, «Where is the traveller?». She said, «There was no traveller, but mud. You deceive people. You will be taken by hunger, and eat nothing.» The rabbit said, «A stranger will be killed by you». (Because she accused her son of wrong doing, he accused her of her lack of hospitality in refusing to feed a stranger.)

9. Formerly the wind-fish was a land animal, and it was going to the pool for water, for all the animals drank from a great lake. And all the animals that were in the wilderness were racing to the water, and all the animals passed the wind-fish. As they passed they laughed at him because he was so slow. And the ostrich came last, and he said, «Wind-fish, why are you left behind by the people?». And the wind-fish said, «The people are too much for me». The ostrich put the wind-fish under its arm, and ran swiftly, and it passed all the people (the animals), and it came to the lake first, and the ostrich said, «Wind-fish, drink». And the wind-fish said, «You drink first». And the ostrich drank, and after it had finished the wind-fish began to drink, and it drank, and it continued to drink, and it took up all the water in the great pool, so that it was badly swollen, and all the people came, and they lacked water. And the rabbit said

12: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918)1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

to the elephant, «Let us crown the wind-fish that he may become king». And when he was crowned he said to the elephant, «Elephant, who told you to crown me?» «The rabbit». The wind-fish then said, «You, elephant, come here. You are king. Why do you not give the people water?» The elephant said, «You are great». Then the wind-fish went to the bank of the pool, and it vomited upon the earth, and the pool was filled, and all the people drank. And the wind-fish said, «Ostrich, I am going into the water, for I am accustomed to be passed by the people». And it became a river animal.

L. Oyler.

13: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1920 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

THE SHILLUK'S BELIEF IN THE GOOD MEDICINE MEN.

BY REV. D. S. OYLER.

756 The Shilluks think of the witch doctors or medicine men as good, not because their lives are good, nor yet because their practice is good, but because they are looked upon as the channels through which occult powers may be transmitted to men. Their powers are for sale, and man in his need may go to them for help. The patient, who brings no fee, will not be treated, as they do no charity work. In the contest between good and evil, they seem to typify the good, as combating the powers of the evil medicine man.

The people are not agreed as to the source whence the medicine [574] man receives his power. Some maintain that the power comes from God, and others, that it is a heritage from the man's ancestors but the difference is not great, as those, who think of the power as coming from the ancestors, would also say that the first person of the line having the power received it from God. A medicine man is usually followed by one of his sons. The child to receive the power is designated by the father, and is usually either the oldest or youngest son, though a daughter may also be possessed of the power to work charms. The occult power may also descend on the descendants of a son or a daughter of a medicine man, who did not inherit that power, and the fact that the power of working charms comes to a person whose father was not a witch doctor may be explained as a proof of the return of the power of some forgotten ancestor.

756 When a man begins the practice of the art the first ceremony 761 consists of a dedication prayer something like this: "You who are God, the power is yours. In order that I may save people, help [538] me. Father, and my ancestor, the power was yours, so help me. The fee is yours, father, it will be given by me to you, and God". So the first fee is dedicated to God or to the source of the power, as a sort of payment to obtain the power. The first fee is usually a female, either a lamb, kid or calf, though occasionally a male

[p. 110]

13: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1920 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

may be thus dedicated. The animal so devoted must be young. Only the children of the medicine man may drink the milk of the consecrated animal, and its offspring may not be sold, though that is sometimes violated. If the devoted animal is a cow the calves are kept until the man has enough to get a wife, and from the children of that wife his successor is chosen. When such an animal dies its meat is eaten, but annually a sacrifice of either an ox or sheep is offered for it, and the tail, feet, and head of the sacrifice are cut off, and hung on a pole. The successor to the devoted animal is chosen from among its offspring. When the devoted animal is a male it is not permitted to die a natural death, as that would bring disaster on the village. When the first fee is a sheep, the medicine man may later substitute a cow for it, if he becomes prosperous. If the son inherits a devoted animal from his father it is not necessary for him to devote his first fee thus to the source of his power.

When a witch doctor takes a case he practically always offers a prayer, and while they are different yet the thought in each is the same. One such prayer was given thus: "God you are the one, who gives me the power. What power did I have before? I praise you, and my ancestor (Nikang), and Deng (who is worshipped by the Dinkas), and my father and mother. Is it not thus that you give me food?" The prayer may have many petitions, but practically the only reason given why it should be answered is, in order that the medicine man may get his food thereby.

The proof of the fact that the medicine man has the power he covets is found in the cures he makes. If a witch doctor fails in his first cases it is often taken as a proof that he does not have the power. However after a man has once established his reputation failure does not have such a serious effect on his practice.

Many of the medicine men have physical defects, and their children are usually sickly, and many of them are deformed. The natives say that this is caused by the fact that the shades of their victims bring a curse on the medicine man, and also on his family. The medicine man is usually well-to-do because of his exorbitant charges, and he can afford to, and does, take many wives, but he usually only has a few children.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

of *reth* Fafiti's houses, searching for him in the way the dancers had done at the funeral dance. They stopped before each house while the dancers danced up to them. They spent rather longer in front of the tomb of Fafiti, and then suddenly moved off on their way with all their following.

They passed the village of the new *reth*, paying no attention to it, and went direct to the village of the chief of Golbainy (and all Gol Dhiang). Some 150 yards north of the village the images stopped, and the company prayed to them and sang. They approached the village from the side away from the road, but, instead of dancing straight in, they stopped on the threshold, and the people of the village, led by the chief, danced up to them as if to ward them off, and then quickly retired. The chief was called up, and then went off to his house. He brought a small grass mat (one foot square used for covering pots as a protection from flies), a small piece of rope,[14] and put them on the ground. Dak and Nyikang stepped over the mat and rope and entered the village. A short dance round the village followed of the usual pattern, with Nyikang and Dak taking part. After a little Nyikang and Dak took up a position before the house which had been prepared for them in case they should wish to spend the night. The congregation sat down before them and sang songs. The women sat with heads averted from Nyikang. The refrain of the most popular song was :—

"Let the Dervish wreak his will,
Nyikang's land will prosper still."

The chief was called once more and had a secret talk with Dak. It is the tradition that Nyikang presents the chief of Golbainy on every installation with a spear, because originally Nyikang invested his forebear with a spear of office. The alleged original spear is still used to cure disease. A piece of goat's ear is cut off with the spear and tied on the patient's ankle. The chief first provided a cattle

14. This may have been a pledge for the gift of sheep or a bull, or instead of a sheep for Nyikang to step over on entering the village.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

and over. The men beat alternately, and were accompanied by the people seated on the ground in front of them chanting together, "*Kwaa*, you are great, *Kwaa*, you are great." 533 643

A few minutes later young men brought out bundles of sticks and ropes called *ongwo*, which had been brought from the Fanyikang district near Tonga.

At 9.15 a messenger appeared from Fashoda and the tempo of the drums was increased. Soon everyone in the village (including the women who had been keeping close to their houses) was seated in front of the houses. As the beat increased the people began to chant together "*Kwaa dibong, Kwaa dibong*", and to lean forwards and backwards. One man asked me why I did not place my hands on the ground and say "*Kwaa dibong*", and when I asked him if one should worship with the lips or with the heart, he quickly got the point, and said it was bad to worship only with the lips, for Nyikang would know. Then four men appeared with baskets on their heads over which were spread small mats. On inquiry I was told that no one knew just what was in the baskets, but on later inquiry I discovered they were the "things of Nyikang" such as his shoes, cloth, beads, food, and the like. At this point an old woman appeared from the house, and I was told she had been preparing Nyikang for the journey, and she was called *nyakwer* (*Note* 13) or *nyibang Nyikang* (slave of Nyikang). It seems she is something of a priestess in that she takes care of Nyikang at the village of Akurwa and resides in the temple of Nyikang. She now led the people in song, a few words of which I was able to get, and which were as follows:—"Open your mouth, Great One, and speak to us. Tell us what you are going to bring to us. Promise us the things we beg of you." This was repeated over and over with the old woman leading and the others following antiphonally. 643 [778] [793] [533 539]

The point behind the song is that these people of Akurwa are guardians of Nyikang, and they will not stir out of their village unless the new king promises them great riches. The new king had promised 643 782

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

were as long as the body. Dak could rest on the ground[19] on the end of the bamboo pole, but Nyikang was never taken off the shoulder of the man carrying him.

As the procession started another sheep was sacrificed and the blood sprinkled on the ground in front of the marching men. Dak and Nyikang led side by side, with the two drummers taking their positions on each side and constantly beating the drums. The men with the six baskets came next, and then the men with bundles of sticks and ropes. Finally all the followers fell in behind.

The village was circled three times at a half trot, all keeping time with the drums, and then they started for Fashoda at 9.30 a.m. Relatively few people were in the procession as they started, but hundreds began to gather in from all sides until there were approximately six hundred followers when they reached the *kal ui jang* (place of calling together). Two hours were required for the procession to go two miles, for there was much dancing and singing, moving forward and again backwards, along the whole way. As the people danced along in rhythm to the drumbeat they also sang "open your mouth, Great One, and bring us your promises" or "open your mouth and answer our boggings." From time to time Dak would run out ahead as if to survey the road, and then come back to his place beside Nyikang. If the people crowded too close, Dak would run after them, and everyone would scatter as if the devil were after them.

On reaching a spot within half a mile of Fashoda the procession stopped and waited until messengers had gone to meet the king's party coming from Debalo. They brought back with them some cattle tethering ropes as tokens of the cows and bulls to be paid. One or two of these were refused by the elders who were gathered under a tree, and the messengers had to go back again. Finally all was arranged, and with much shouting and drum beating, the procession started for Fashoda to meet and fight with the followers of the approaching king.

19. We think that Dak never rested directly on the ground but on the bearer.

Just before dawn they set up the four royal drums on end in holes specially dug in the ground[1] and in the centre of the village opposite the *kwogo*. They were beaten for a short while as a signal that the public ceremonies of mourning would begin that day. In addition a fire was lit using fire sticks (*pic mac*), an important ritual item in any Shilluk ceremony, and a sheep was sacrificed.

I reached Kujo that afternoon just in time to see the *kwo Nyikir* enter the village again, singing as they came and carrying the spear of Nyikang wrapped in white cloth and also a basket which I was told contained certain sacred relics including the bell or Nyikang (*orak Nyikang*). The party stepped over a sheep held to the ground in front of them[1] and then took up their position round the drums.

Meanwhile an ox had been tethered near to the drums and a Shilluk warrior stood by, spear in hand. At a given signal he plunged his spear into the ox, missing the heart, and causing only a slight wound in the haunch, with the result that it broke away and had to be despatched outside the village. No particular attention was paid to this unfortunate incident which might have been regarded as an ill omen, and immediately the drums began to beat, the *kwo* Nyikir skipping round them four times and again stepping on to and over a sheep tethered to the ground. The main body of spectators consisting of important persons and the occupants of Kujo and neighbouring villages then entered the arena. These people carrying millet stalks, sticks and swords, but no spears, danced round the drums in an anti-clockwise direction singing the song of Nyikang followed by that of *reth* Dak Nyikang and finally a new song composed in honour of the deceased. After several minutes of dancing in this manner, the crowd moved forward and knelt facing the shrine clapping their hands as a sign of grief. These royal mourning songs reflect the Shilluks' attitude towards their kings. *Agwet wad Nyidhongo piny ayark cie Yor wad Nyidhongo labo ariwy,"* Agwet wad Nyidhongo, the earth is

[1] These holes are specially dug beforehand and bells and other sacred objects put beneath the drums. For normal social events Shilluk drums are laid horizontally or lean against supports set in the ground.

[1] The significance of this act is not clear and Shilluk merely say that it must be done, it is "according to custom," *kwong*. I have, however, frequently heard it said that the act, *okodh*, is intended to remove impurities which might be harmful to the *reth*. The procedure is followed in all sorts of ritual situations in which the *reth* is concerned. It will be remembered that the *reth* steps over a bull-calf when he leaves Dubulo and over a black bull at *Acwpiar* on his way to Fashoda on the first day of the installation ceremonies. It will also be remembered that in the old days, prior to *reth* Fadiet, a man (and a girl) was subjected to the same ceremony as the bulls and sheep, and, though it is not true that he invariably died in the process, he was never allowed to come into direct contact with the *reth*. See Howell and Thomson, *op. cit.*, pp. 31, 34 and p. 78, Note 21.

22: Howell E-5 (1951) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

533 destroyed, Yor son of Nyidhongo, the country is ruined," is one of the main
539 refrains of the song of Yor. Other songs refer to the immortality of their
766 *reths*. Of Dak, son of Nyikang, we hear that he only vanished, he did not die.
[775] Of Kwoikon, who was killed in battle against the Dervishes at Jebel Gadir,
[778] they sing, *Kurjang* (Kwoikon) *cie kwy abui tho nyinang kecli tho wadi nini*, "Kurjang the fierce one, when he went out to die he did not fear, fierce one, death is only sleeping."

766 Warriors from the surrounding settlement of Panyidwai Pac then entered in battle order, carrying their shields and spears. After a preliminary march
[576] round the arena, spears and shields were discarded and only sticks and millet stalks carried. This is usual at Shilluk public ceremonies. Dances continued for three days, men of Panyikang, Detim, Fakang and Malakai attended and the procedure was not different. Over two hundred and eighty oxen were slaughtered for the occasion, the tails and some of the horns being hung on the fence surrounding the tomb, while the meat was consumed by the participants.

[783] On the final day, after a great show of dancing and further sacrifices, the ceremony of purification known as *dango* (*or Yal*) took place. The *bangreth*, *nyireth* and also many other kinsmen of the late *reth* were conducted by the *ororo* into the centre of the village, where an ox was sacrificed while they sat round in the centre. According to strict Shilluk custom, this should have
[777 303] been followed by a general shaving of heads. In fact, they did not do so, possibly because the ritual bathing in the river was considered sufficient purification. No satisfactory explanation for this deviation from custom was forthcoming. It is worth mentioning also that the *ekak nam*, latrine, and the *bilo* (*or gol pi*) bath place, of the late *reth*, which are attached to the *gol dwong* and used by him in the past, were fenced off and guarded. Anyone approaching them was seized by the *ororo* and made to pay a small forfeit.

643 The *reth*-elect, *Kur wad Fidiri*, was present on the first day of the *ororo*,
766 as a gesture of respect to his predecessor, for it is not necessary for the new *reth* to be there and he never appears in public. In particular he may not see the relics of Nyikang carried by the *kwa Nyikir*, for these are associated with the death and burial of a *reth*, not with the living.

766 The *kwa Nyikir* then set out for Debwor where a similar ceremony was to be held for the northern Shilluk. I was not myself present and am indebted to Mr. J. L. Baker for the following account.

"On November 21st, the *ororo* and *kwa Nyikir* had returned to Fashoda for the final act in the obsequies of *reth* Dak and arrived there after several days spent on the road. At about 4 p.m., as at Kodjo where the actual bodily

22: Howell E-5 (1951) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

remains of the *reth* had been buried, the *kwa* Nyikir took the field in front of four upturned drums. These drums were either those of the village of Debwor or had been borrowed from nearby villages. The anti-clockwise procession of the *kwa Nyikir* then began, each of them hopping over a gourd (*kwoy*) which was produced as a substitute for a sheep which is normally used on these occasions. The drummers, led by *jago* Bul, their chief, then took up their position round the drums and began to beat them. At Debwor there was no ritual lighting of fire (*pic*) by five sticks as at Kujo and which had preceded all ceremonies relating to the election of the *reth* and the burial of the old one; possibly the spirit of the late *reth* had left the place. As the drums began to beat, the chiefs of Gerr—with the exception of the chief of Mucwo who was in charge of the arrangements for the installation then being made at the shrine at Akurwa and had not come—began to dance with the shuffling gait of a religious dance (*yiceo* as opposed to social dances, *cong tugo*) and finally all went up to the hut in which the late *reth*'s body had lain for so many months and sang songs to Nyikang outside it just as the chiefs of Lusk had done outside the burial hut at Kujo and an ox (*nyijak*) was speared as a sacrifice. The purport of this song was "we have asked for cows but instead you have beaten us; please restore to us our cows this time." This presumably means that they were asking for better treatment under the new *reth*, for Dak *wad* Fadiet, "the scourge of Nyikang," had been a most unpopular figure outside his own area.

With this, the important ceremonies were over and the march of the clans followed. The sections which participated were Both, Bul, Nyingaro, Pabur, Agudo, Biu, Thwolang, Yony, Lul, Fashoda, Nyigir, Golbany, Fadhiang, and Lemo. This took two days. Kodok and Golo did not come, possibly because they were too much in favour of the house of Fadiet and had never supported Dak. Thus the pattern of the ceremony in Gerr followed closely that which had been performed in Lusk at Kujo, only there was no body to bury. The predatory *orwa* had little to do except the unpleasant one of taking up the bier and skins on which the *reth*'s remains had previously lain and rotted and burying them inside the hut and of guarding the sacred mound outside the hut. I had thought that this hut, where the body of the late *reth* had been immured, would be broken down when the remains had been brought out to carry to Kujo, but this was not so, and the *orwa* had the ghoulish task of breaking down the door and collecting the remains into a presentable bundle while the house was still standing. The hut was still in good condition and will not be broken down until later, when the *kangwok* Dak will level the hut to ground, though they will continue to occupy the rest of the village as formerly."

26: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1937)1937
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

195 643 648 [678] employed they are being nursed by God (Shil., *milk yi Juok*). They do not go to, come from or enter a house: they are taken to, brought from or stuffed into a house (as the case may be) by God. God is supposedly the sole motive power of such ethereal beings. Sometimes this fiction produces strange complications in the syntax, and another difficulty is that in replying you must be careful to use the ordinary word in relation to yourself, thus tacitly deprecating the idea of any divine agency as far as you are concerned.

195 643 The *Reth*'s head is respectfully designated his "pebble," his pipe is his "mud," his beer is his "water" and his donkey is his "dog." When he sits on the ground he is said to have "come to,anchor" (Shil., *amak*). When he gets up he is, of course, lifted by God. It seems that the terms used for royal objects are not, as might have been expected, names of things superior to the actual object, but that they are inferior substitutes. An explanation may be that in the magnificence of the royal presence the objects surrounding him lose half their natural lustre.

195 643 648 539 In the following dialogue the Shilluk expressions which would be used are translated as exactly as possible into English. If there is anything comic in it, it must be stressed that this is purely incidental to the purpose of this note (which is serious).

SCENE—FASHODA. The District Commissioner stops the lorry outside the royal homestead to pick up the *Reth* to take him to Kodok to meet the Governor.

D.C. (*by way of greeting*): You have been out grazing, Father?

RETH (*deprecatingly*): I have slept; have you been out to graze?

D.C.: Yes, thank you, I have slept.

RETH: You have been brought by God?

D.C.: I have come.

RETH: You are being nursed by God?

D.C.: I am quite well, thank you; now, are you ready to be taken by God to Kodok? If so, be lifted up by God into the front seat beside me and we will be off; . . . but wait; have you got that thing for your pebble which the Governor-General gave you?

RETH: Oh, I am so sorry. I have forgotten to get it. I will go and fetch it. Meanwhile, you be taken by God in the lorry to that tree, turn

26: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1937)1937
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

round, and be brought back here again by God. I will be back here in a second. 195 643

D.C.: Be taken away by God. (*D.C. turns the lorry round and awaits the Reth.*) You have found it? Good. Now we are off. . . . I thought you would be nursed by God in Kodok over the week-end as there are many cases I want you to see. Then you can be taken back to Fashoda by God on Monday on your dog. 648 539

RETH: Yes, I can return on Monday on my donkey.

28: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1918 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

NIKAWNG'S PLACE
IN THE SHILLUK RELIGION

BY REV. D. S. OYLER.

The Shilluks being without a written language have lacked the means to collect and verify their religious beliefs. When asked as to their beliefs they refer to the old men, who have given them the traditions. Defects of memory, different sources of information, and the personal beliefs, and desires of the narrator, tend to give a diversity of belief.

The Shilluks profess belief in a Supreme Being. He is greater than Nikawng or any other king. He is the Creator of the world, but he is far distant. They are not able to come into close contact with him, and feeling that he is far beyond their reach, and dismayed by the disasters, which come to them apparently from the hand of God, they feel the need of some one to stand between them and God. Nikawng is the chief intermediary, though others stand between them and God, either for good or evil. The distance of the Creator, and the nearness of the intercessor often tends to give him the greater power and influence.

They never pray to God without invoking an intercessor. A typical prayer in which Nikawng is invoked with God can be given.

"We praise you, you who are God. Protect us, we are in your hands, and protect us, save me. You and Nikawng you are the ones, who created, people are in your hands, and it is you Nikawng, who are accustomed to assist God to save, and it is you who give the rain. The sun is yours, and the sea (river) is yours, you who are Nikawng. You came from under the sun, you and your father, you two saved the earth, and your son Dak, you subdued all the peoples. The cow (for sacrifice) is here for you, and the blood will go to God and you. Now hear all of you, you the people of the earth, and save us. The person who rejects your talk will die."

This veneration of Nikawng may possibly be a bit of ancestor worship.

[p. 293]

28: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1918 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

for they occasionally pray to their ancestors in the same way, and also to the dead chief of the village. The chief is looked upon as a father. Infrequently they pray to the spirit of some departed friend. When a person has a pleasant dream about a departed friend, a prayer is frequently addressed to his spirit, as he is well disposed. The mother, brothers and sisters may also be invoked.

When prayer is to be offered to the spirit of a dead person, a female sheep is brought to the grave. If the person making the prayer is not the son of the deceased, the right ear is cut from the sheep, and tied to the ankle of the person making the offering, and the wounded ear is washed in a gourd of water, so that the blood remains in the water, and then the water is poured on the grave, and part of it is thrown in the eye of the sun (that is thrown out in front of the sun). It is for God so that it will go to him. The sheep becomes the property of the heir of the deceased. The prayer is offered before the ear is cut off. If the son offers, prayer is made to God and to the deceased, and then the sheep is killed as soon as the signs are right. The sheep is cut open, and the contents of the stomach and bowels are thrown on the house of the offerer, and then the meat is cooked. The meat can not be tasted until the oldest living wife of the deceased takes some of the soup in a small gourd, which is covered with a small native mat, and pours it on the grave. The soup that remains in the gourd is poured out in front of the house. The old men are then called to take the lead in eating the sacrifice. Women of all ages may eat of the sacrifice, but only the boys and old men of the males may eat, as no men of military age may eat of it. When the feast is finished the bones are carefully collected, and thrown into the river, as it would be bad if the bones of a devoted sheep should be gnawed by a dog.

While there is no set form for the prayer, and its length is determined by the sheep, yet they are all very similar, and the following is an example.

"We praise you, you, who are God, it was you, who gave me my father, who begot me. I pray to you also my father. Why did you go to the earth, and keep silence? Was not this your house before? When evil comes to your house, why do you not pray to God? Your house is given as a plaything to the people. You went to the presence of God, and we thought that nothing evil would befall us again, after you left. Now help.

28: Oyler M-S (ca. 1918) 1918 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

God. Why do you leave the responsibility of acting on God alone? God's spirit becomes tired (from work), and he leaves people, and they die. Why do you not see and save us? You went to the ground, and you have forgotten that a person from another house does not guard yours.»

The prayer is continued in this strain until the sheep, responding to the necessity of nature, relieves itself, and that is taken as an omen that the prayer has been heard, and a favourable answer will be given. That which comes from the sheep is put on the grave. If the omen is delayed, the sheep may be taken to a house, and left there to be brought out another day. The prayer life among the Shilluks is developed by adversity, as they seldom if ever pray, when in prosperous circumstances.

Their veneration of Nikaung does not blind their eyes to his faults. When a prayer has been offered to Nikaung, and the answer is not given as had been hoped, the disappointed one curses Nikaung. That is true especially in the case of death. When death is approaching, they sacrifice to Nikaung and God, and pray that death may be averted. If the death occurs the bereaved ones curse Nikaung, because he did not exert himself in their behalf. Apparently they do not pray to him that the condition of the deceased may be happy after death. He is sometimes spoken of as the son of God, but it is not definite, as they also use the same term in regard to his father, and one or two others.

They maintain that Nikaung still lives. He is even now watching over the Shilluks, and should he die the whole race would die, but in spite of their belief they have a sacred house for Nikaung, which is similar to the sacred houses in which the later kings have been buried. This fact weakens their statement that they believe that he still lives.

The departed leader comes back to his country on certain occasions. At night he can be heard in the sacred house, which has been dedicated to him. He sharpens his spear, or beats with his club, but when the attendants enter the house, no visible form is to be seen, but they know that the sounds were made by him. He may also ring a bell that is in the sacred house. When he is heard in the sacred house, the Shilluks say: «Nikaung walks in his country». They rejoice because it is an indication that he is actively watching over his people.

When the rains do not begin as soon as the natives think they should,